

Advanced Standing Announcement
February 10, 2012

Advanced Standing

Today is an exciting day—as we announce a new partnership that will improve quality in our assisted living facilities and empower consumers with new information.

- The Department and Health Care Association of New Jersey Foundation are launching a new pilot, the first of its kind in the county, to expand oversight of assisted living facilities and for the first time ever collect quality data on these facilities.
- Assisted Living residences in our state will now have the option of being inspected by the Health Care Association of New Jersey Foundation and receive a special designation.
- This new designation, entitled Advanced Standing, will be awarded to facilities that meet quality benchmarks and have satisfied all state licensing regulations.
- So when potential residents and their families visit facilities they can ask to see documentation that indicates the facility has been given an Advanced Standing status.
- As part of the project, Health Care Association of New Jersey Foundation will also offer information on programs offered at participating assisted living facilities, which can help potential residents make decisions about which facilities they would like to live in.
- This program also represents a change in culture for state government—more often we are in the position of ensuring minimum standards enforced with penalties & fines. But in this case, we are asking providers to go beyond the minimum—to strive for excellence and be awarded with a special designation

Department's role

- Within this pilot project the Department would maintain full State oversight of assisted living services and facilities.
- We will continue to conduct complaint investigations for all facilities, but limit routine inspections to facilities without advanced standing.
- This is modeled in part on how we work with hospitals and the federal government – CMS.
- The Department will be auditing the work of this pilot. We will randomly conduct unannounced surveys at up to 25% of facilities with Advanced Standing in the first year of the project and up to 10% each year after to validate surveys performed through this initiative.
- The Department will also be represented on the Peer Review Panel for the program, which will choose the quality indicators that will be reported by facilities participating in the Advanced Standing Program.

Improving quality & consumer information

- This new four-year pilot program is another step forward in making health care more transparent and ensuring our residents receive quality care.

- The Advanced Standing designation will offer insight on quality at facilities and provide information on programs offered at participating assisted living facilities—which can influence a potential resident’s choice.
- The Department is committed to increasing the accessibility and transparency of health information to empower people to make informed choices and help providers improve quality of care.
- Just last week the Department unveiled an expanded website that allows the public to examine inspection reports for 260 licensed or certified ambulatory surgery centers. And we intend to expand this site to include inspections of all facilities.
- Once an assisted living facility is given an Advanced Standing designation—this information will also be added to our web site as well—so consumers can easily view if a facility they are interested in has the designation
- And as I mentioned earlier, through this program we will now have quality data on assisted living—which was not been available
- I strongly believe, through promoting access to health information, we can have a dramatic impact on the quality of life for residents and the care they receive.

Working Smarter

- This initiative also supports another priority—ensuring the Department is working smarter.
- This partnership will help the department focus resources on investigating complaints and inspecting facilities that are not part of the Advanced Standing program.
- My goal is to focus our Department’s operations to enhance our efficiency and effectiveness, ensure our services are readily available for our constituents and improve our customer service to the regulated community.
- At a time of limited government resources, strategic partnerships like the one we are announcing today are critical in achieving that goal.
- Working together, we can improve care and quality in our state.